

Behaviorally Anchored Ratings Scale (BARS) Guide

1. Acceptance of Supervision – *Willingly accepts and follows instructions given by supervisor in the performance of duties; responds to training and coaching in a constructive manner.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Readily accepts and completes assigned responsibilities• Attempts to improve performance following constructive criticism• Follows policies set by supervisor without reminder• Cooperates willingly with supervisor• Follows specific instructions
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates exceptional ability to independently complete assigned responsibilities• Never complains about assigned tasks• Improves performance following constructive criticism• Knows and follows all policies set by supervisor
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complains about assigned tasks; often questions supervisory requests• Fails to consistently follow all policies set by supervisor• Becomes upset when constructively criticized• Sometimes fails to follow specific instructions

2. Adaptability/Flexibility – *Adapts readily to new situations and changes in the workplace; works well under pressure; learns and functions well under widely different situations and circumstances.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Readily adjusts to new situations and responsibilities• Easily handles a wide variety of tasks, sometimes concurrently• Readily comprehends new job related information• Performs well under widely different and/or changing circumstances
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Functions effectively under unusually high levels of mental or emotional stress• Capable of assisting other staff with change while maintaining regular personal workload• Conforms to changing demands with a positive attitude and skills
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has difficulty adjusting to changes in workload or assignments• Becomes nervous or upset under normal job stress• Loses composure under higher than normal stress level• Lacks patience when dealing with more than one assignment

3. Change Management – *Openly supports change; motivates and encourages fellow employees to support change; successfully implements change in work unit.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works hard to implement successful change in areas of responsibility • Openly supports change • Recommends and implements further changes to improve processes and customer service • Encourages others to make changes • Makes serious effort and takes responsible risk to improve processes
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promotes the possibilities that change can bring • Regularly tries new ways of doing things to improve processes • Searches for and implements “best practices” to improve processes and customer service
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resists change or innovation, or takes a “wait & see” approach • Can become defensive • Averse to taking any risk • Continues to try to do things the way they have “always been done.”

4. Communication – *Comprehends oral and written information, and clearly and effectively expresses self in the presentation of ideas; develops written work in a logical and comprehensive manner where appropriate.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates oral and written communication skills commensurate with job responsibilities • Reports and communications are accurately spelled and utilize correct grammar • Possesses sufficient command of English language and adequate grammar skills for position • Able to effectively present personal viewpoint • Consistently attempts to be effective and attentive listener • Readily comprehends oral and/or written instructions when first presented
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates unique ability to transmit difficult information in an understandable manner • Superior comprehension of oral and/or written instructions • Capable of reviewing materials for others due to superior command of English usage • Possesses outstanding persuasive powers • Practices superior listening skills and positive body language techniques
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports and communications are vague or poorly written • Reports and communications contain spelling or grammar errors • Has difficulty verbalizing thought patterns, or expressing facts, ideas, and/or questions needed for position • Misinterprets or is slow to comprehend oral and/or written instructions • Practices insufficient listening skills which promote an environment of misunderstanding

5. Composure/Stability – *Works well under pressure; responds appropriately to stressful/emergency situations; approaches tasks with patience and firmness; is consistent in behavior.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes appropriate action in emergency situations • Maintains composure in emergency or high-stress situations • Acts in a calm, yet firm manner under adverse conditions • Rarely intimidated by others • Exercises authority when appropriate
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts professionally in all situations • Is not intimidated by any person/situation • Responds quickly and efficiently in emergency situations • Remains firm and calm under serious/dangerous circumstances
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is uncertain of appropriate action in emergency situations • Is reluctant to or uncertain how to exercise appropriate authority • Becomes nervous or upset under normal stress levels • Loses composure in emergency or high-stress situations • Is easily intimidated by others

6. Confidentiality – *Can be trusted to use discretion in dealing with customers and fellow employees; maintains confidentiality of information or materials appropriate to position.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains the confidentiality of all appropriate records or materials • Uses discretion in dealing with all clients/customers and/or fellow employees • Does not participate in office gossip concerning clients/customers and/or fellow employees • Discloses appropriate information at appropriate times based on relevant statutes, rules or policies
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promotes atmosphere of confidentiality through continuous monitoring and communication of confidentiality standards • Actively discourages office gossip about clients/customers and/or fellow employees
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates lack of concern for confidentiality through behavior or conversation • Participates in office gossip with little regard to potential negative consequences • Demonstrates insufficient knowledge of all statutes and/or policies relating to the confidentiality of relevant records and materials

7. Customer Service – *Demonstrates knowledge of internal and external customers; is sensitive to customer needs and expectations; anticipates needs and responds promptly and willingly to provide information, services and/or products as needed.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of internal customer concept and treats all customers with high levels of sensitivity and respect • Always provides satisfactory and sometimes excellent customer service • Responds to all customer requests promptly • Maintains personal accountability and ownership in customer service rendered • Seeks feedback from customers and adjusts behavior accordingly
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides excellent service to all customers, frequently going beyond what is strictly required • Keeps informed about customers' needs and/or wants and in general, anticipates customers' needs • Responds to customer requests with high degree of sensitivity and a sense of urgency • Builds close, collaborative relationships with all customers • Motivates others to provide service excellence and leads by example • Examines and recommends changes to processes to improve customer service
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates inadequate knowledge of internal customer concept • Views customers as an irritation and/or a problem • Resists changes in how customers are served • Waits to be asked before responding to customers' needs • Responds to requests with little sense of urgency

8. Directing/Coaching – *Defines and coordinates work and delegates appropriately to best accomplish goals; adjusts assignments to maintain workflow; provides immediate and effective feedback to employees concerning behavior and performance.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocates materials and equipment to accommodate work flow • Regulates the assignments and responsibilities of subordinate employees to ensure that work is completed on or ahead of schedule • Work assignments are delegated to optimize output • Reassigns tasks when necessary
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skillfully manages subordinates for optimal performance and output • Demonstrates superior skill in ensuring that priorities are adhered to • Demonstrates exceptional ability to meet/exceed deadlines in emergency situations • Voluntarily directs additional administrative responsibilities
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has difficulty in prioritizing, delegating, monitoring or adjusting work activities of subordinate employees • Has difficulty meeting deadlines • Does not coordinate interdepartmental issues • Fails to direct staff toward achieving maximum performance

9. Drive for Results – *Understands importance of achieving results; makes effort necessary to achieve goals/objectives; achieves results requested or agreed upon.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands importance of achieving results • Makes all effort necessary to achieving goals/objectives • Usually achieves requested results in appropriate time frame
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes appropriate decisive action to achieve goals/objectives • Consistently surpasses requested results or agreed upon objective • Not deterred by uncertainty, risk or conflict; results oriented • Demonstrates high sense of urgency in achieving results
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rarely achieves desired results • Makes excuses for lack of achievement • Tends to blame others or circumstances when results were achievable • May be stopped by uncertainty, risk or conflict • Visible lack of urgency, commitment, or effort for results

10. Employee Relations – *Is supportive, considerate, fair, and objective in one's behavior toward subordinates; establishes and maintains a cordial and harmonious work atmosphere.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes/maintains a cordial and harmonious work atmosphere by effectively communicating with individuals • Offers encouragement and support to subordinates when work gets difficult • Exhibits fair and objective behavior toward subordinate employees • Promotes an environment that is low in conflict
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages employees to communicate ideas or questions regarding work operations • Extremely fair, supportive, and objective in behavior toward subordinates • Promotes a respect-filled environment
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often subjective and/or unfair when dealing with individuals • Ineffective in establishing or maintaining a cordial and harmonious work atmosphere • Provides little encouragement or support to employees • Environment is conflict-filled.

11. Financial Planning/Budgeting – *Fully understands the budgetary parameters of the work unit; plans and operates within the budget; capable of rationalizing allocation of resources.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulates, prioritizes and develops budgetary items • Capable of rationalizing allocation of resources for budgetary line items • Plans and operates within budget; continually reprioritizes to reflect changes in resources • Formulates expense guidelines for ongoing and future projects • Manages fiscal resources in emergency situations • Reviews budgets for cost efficiencies
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert ability to manage emergency budget revisions • Exceptional ability to identify, investigate, and manage budgetary results • Demonstrates unique aptitude to forecast budgetary factors • Presents effective case in communicating budgetary requests • Manages to deliver positive budgetary results
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaccurately forecasts budgetary parameters • Fails to establish budgetary priorities • Fails to adequately manage fiscal resources resulting in excessive cost overruns • Rarely reviews budgets for cost efficiency

12. Interpersonal Relations – *Establishes effective working relationships with co-workers, supervisors & managers, clients and/or the public; gets along well with others.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually tactful, considerate and respectful in dealing with others • Establishes or maintains rapport with others • Resolves infrequent conflicts in an appropriate and respectful way • Cooperates with all other staff to complete assignments • Uses discretion when dealing with others • Refrains from disturbing the work of others • Does not allow personal issues to intrude on work relationships
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always tactful, considerate and respectful in dealing with others • Never experiences conflict with others • Demonstrates exceptional ability to promote a positive atmosphere among co-workers • Continuously establishes effective work relationships with all agency stakeholders • Personal issues never intrude on work relationships
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently involved in conflict with others • Has difficulty being tactful, considerate and respectful in dealing with others • Is indiscreet in dealing with others • Personal issues frequently intrude on work relationships • Reluctant or refuses to cooperate with others in completing work assignments • Disturbs others while they are working

13. Job Knowledge – *Possesses adequate knowledge skills and experience to perform the duties of the job; understands the purpose of the work unit and how position contributes to the overall mission of the agency; maintains competency in essential areas.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates substantial knowledge and skill in job-related areas • Willingly participates in training to maintain or enhance current knowledge of principles, procedures, methods, and/or technology • Has thorough knowledge of how one's job fits into the overall agency mission • May serve as resource person for peers
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently serves as resource person for peers • May serve as resource person for supervisor • Demonstrates exceptional knowledge and skills in job-related areas • Proactively remains up to date with all principles, procedures, methods, and technology
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates insufficient or vague knowledge and skill in job-related areas • Exhibits little interest in training to maintain current knowledge of principles, procedures, methods or technology • Is frequently unable to answer job-related questions

14. Judgment – *Exercises logical thinking and foresees consequences of actions; has adequate knowledge of all applicable policies or rules and selects appropriate guidelines or procedures to follow in a variety of situations.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports all incidents to appropriate source and completes all required documentation • Requests assistance from appropriate personnel when necessary • Recognizes and chooses appropriate course of action when dealing with difficult or sensitive situations • Makes appropriate decisions when dealing with client population and peers • Recognizes all potentially dangerous situations and takes appropriate action • Ensures all security procedures are followed according to agency policy
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently recognizes and chooses best course of action when dealing with difficult or sensitive situations • Reports are consistently accurate, concise and clearly understandable • Utilizes security procedures to anticipate and prevent problems
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports are incomplete, inaccurate or incomprehensible • Fails to choose appropriate course of action when dealing with difficult or sensitive situations • Negligent in performing security procedures

15. Motivation/Initiative – *Displays an interest in performance of tasks, including those over and above regular assignments; willingly accepts increasing responsibility and accountability; makes recommendations and suggestions to improve operations.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingly accepts increasing levels of accountability • Takes initiative to enlarge scope of responsibility • Makes recommendations and suggestions to improve operations • Sometimes recommends taking on work to facilitate improvements in operational excellence • Willingly performs additional assignments after expected/delegated work is completed
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides information, coaching and training to others to enhance their knowledge or skills • Proactively takes on increasing levels of accountability • Seeks assignments in addition to expected work • Anticipates problems and develops alternatives in advance
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not assume or accept personal responsibility • Needs frequent guidance and assistance • Does not “make a move” without direction or approval • Does only what is required

16. Organizational Commitment – *Displays high level of effort and commitment to performing work; operates effectively within the organizational structure; demonstrates trustworthiness and responsible behavior.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows through on assigned work • Shows concern about completion of work • Assumes accountability for own actions • Readily accepts assignments • Volunteers for additional work when assignments are completed
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently performs duties over and beyond job description • Volunteers for additional assignments to relieve pressure on supervisor or co-workers • Willingly assumes total responsibility for own actions • Familiarizes self with coworkers’ jobs in order to provide assistance during an absence or when workload is heavy
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not seek additional assignments after expected work is completed • Reluctant to assume accountability for own actions • Complains about duties • Selectively completes only duties enjoyed • Complains when asked to perform an extra task

17. Physical Effort – *Puts forth the physical exertion required to perform assigned tasks. Can be counted on to do one's share of the work.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works well in all temperatures • Adequately performs required heavy lifting • Performs at a sufficient rate of speed • Willing to work in uncomfortable conditions and/or carry out unpleasant tasks
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers to work in uncomfortable conditions and/or carry out unpleasant tasks • Skillfully performs tasks at great speed • Works well in extreme heat or cold • Frequently volunteers to exert above average physical effort
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs at inadequate rate of speed • Reluctant to work in uncomfortable conditions and/or carry out unpleasant tasks • Reluctant to work in extreme heat or cold • Depends on co-workers to do required heavy lifting • Exerts minimal physical effort

18. Planning & Organizing – *Establishes priorities and work sequences to coordinate efforts, maintain work flow and meet deadlines; ensures sufficient functioning through smooth interface with related processes.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently meets deadlines, even under pressure • Continually demonstrates efficient use of work time • Effectively prioritizes assignments, agendas, tasks, and programs • Competent in anticipating the need to rearrange priorities • Prepares for meetings in advance • Maintains consistent and orderly work flow
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent coordination of programs, assignments, and agendas • Thoroughly integrates the work of other departments and/or agencies • Regularly completes assignments ahead of schedule • Anticipates needs and steps required to complete assignments and prepares for future assignments • Continuously strives for improved productivity • Has excellent organizational skills
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misses deadlines frequently • Needs assistance planning work flow • Has difficulty appropriately prioritizing assignments, agendas, tasks and programs • Has inadequate organizational skills

19. Problem Solving/Decision Making – *Recognizes and defines problems; thoroughly obtains and analyzes facts; takes immediate corrective action; uses resources and techniques to develop sound solutions while foreseeing possible consequences.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiently recognizes and defines problems associated with job • Weighs advantages and disadvantages of proposed solutions • Resolves most problem situations and looks for ways to avoid similar problems in future • Can obtain data or information and analyze factual situations for relevancy • Can interpret and apply all relevant procedures, principles, policies and /or statutes • Can develop alternatives when faced with obstacles
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely skilled in assessing impact of problem situations • Instinctive skill in recognizing problem situations before they develop • Notably effective in resolving complaints • Highly creative in development of problem solving techniques • Seeks out and attempts to solve the root causes of problems • Possesses great skill in gathering and analyzing information for application to problem situations
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possesses insufficient knowledge to develop problem solving strategies • Fails to resolve complaints and/or problems • Inconsistent or insufficient in recognizing and defining problems • Requires assistance in weighing advantages and disadvantages of potential solutions • Fails to anticipate the development of problem solutions • Is unable to correctly interpret and apply all relevant procedures, principles, policies and/or statutes

20. Public Relations – *Works effectively with contacts outside the agency in a courteous, cooperative and objective manner. Involves the provision of timely, accurate assistance to the public.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interacts with the public in a courteous and cooperative manner • Handles complaints from individuals from outside the agency in a calm manner • Handles sensitive situations involving individuals outside the agency • Can tactfully handle irate individuals from outside the agency • Can develop and deliver presentations to outside groups pertaining to the agency's function
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates superior ability in establishing favorable relations with the public • Consistently coordinates and communicates new agency policies to outside individuals and agencies • Independently handles sensitive situations involving individuals outside the agency
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient skills in developing and delivering presentations to outside groups • Often communicates incorrect information to the public • Needs assistance in assisting the public with requests for information

21. Staff Development/Performance Management – *Works with employees to create training and development plans; provides regular, balanced feedback to clarify strengths and weaknesses; provides clear standards for employee achievement; fosters individual and collective creativity within the work group.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops individual performance plans which include work standards and/or goals/objectives as appropriate • Consistently monitors and documents employee performance and behavior throughout the review period. • Subordinates receive timely, specific direction to improve performance • Appraisals are completed in a timely fashion • Takes corrective action when appropriate • Possesses general understanding of employee strengths and weaknesses • Recognizes and meets training needs of staff
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has detailed knowledge of employee strengths and weaknesses and incorporates knowledge into detailed development plans to enhance career growth • Partners with employees in creating individual performance plans including detailed work standard and/or appropriate goals and objectives • Coaches employees in supportive fashion in order to achieve desired performance levels • Expertly uses performance management system to monitor, assess and influence the performance of employees • Expert ability to recognize employees not capable of performing required work; recommends appropriate corrective action
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks required/sufficient knowledge of employee strengths and weaknesses • Fails to establish clear performance standards or write appropriate goals/objectives for employees • Documentation of employee performance is insufficient or ambiguous • Cannot support subjective performance appraisals with appropriate documentation • Provides little encouragement and/or looks for opportunities to criticize

22. Staffing/Affirmative Action – *Maintains adequate staffing levels; executes established personnel policies and maintains working conditions; applies all appropriate Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action policies when making staffing decisions; addresses work-related needs of subordinates.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains and schedules a sufficient staff • Handles all leave requests in consistently appropriate fashion • Adequately understands and consistently applies current EEO/AA policies when making staffing decisions (i.e., selection, promotion, demotion, or dismissal) • Asks non-discriminatory, job-related questions when interviewing • Applies annual EEO/AA goals and timetables for protected class recruitment
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possesses a thorough understanding of current EEO/AA policies and accurately interprets and explains to co-workers and subordinates • Consistently makes effective staff decisions as a result of following current EEO/AA policies • Effectively decides and recommends staffing revisions
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks a basic understanding of current EEO/AA policies • Fails to follow current EEO/AA policies when making staffing decisions • Fails to inform employees of current EEO/AA policies • Is known to ask illegal, discriminatory or inappropriate questions when interviewing applicants • Needs assistance in determining appropriate protected class recruitment efforts

23. Teamwork – *Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust and group identity; fosters commitment and team spirit; works cooperatively with others to achieve overall goals.*

Rating	Possible Behavioral examples
Meets Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitates accomplishment of team objectives through cooperation and “lending a hand,” even with assignments outside of normal areas of responsibility • Consistently meets deadlines for team assignments • Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of team/organization mission • Demonstrates positive support for team/organization mission
Exceeds Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts team goals ahead of personal achievement and recognition • Shares credit for team accomplishment liberally and accepts responsibility for overall team performance as appropriate • Plays a standout role in allowing team to exceed expectations through high levels of personal contribution
Does Not Meet Expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not accept responsibility for team performance • Fails to meet deadlines for team assignments • Exhibits negative behavior concerning team/organizational mission

